



Special Focus: Residential Wood Framing



How to comply with workplace-safety requirements

This information sheet is part of a special program at the Department of Labor and Industries to increase compliance with laws on workplace safety and workers' compensation insurance in the residential-wood-framing industry. It will give you an overview of safety and health rules and regulations. (This information does not replace the requirements in the construction standards. Please refer to the standards to determine if you are in compliance.)

Before beginning any framing project, make sure that you:

- Have a written Accident Prevention Program tailored to the needs of the job and to the hazards.
- Conduct a walk-around safety inspection at the beginning of each job, and at least weekly thereafter.
- Conduct crew safety meetings at the beginning of each job, and at least weekly thereafter.
- Have first-aid supplies and first-aid-trained staff or crew leaders on site.
- Provide your employees with proper personal protective equipment, such as shirt, long pants, shoes, hard hat, safety glasses or goggles, and earplugs or earmuffs. Provide training and make sure that your employees use this equipment.

Keep areas free from tripping hazards. Housekeeping presents a constant challenge on construction sites. Debris, cords, hoses, stored or stacked materials, and equipment clutter the site and create hazards that result in falls.

- Keep the job site and all work areas clear as work progresses. Dispose of debris in trash containers or designated areas.
- Keep walkways, entryways and other frequently traveled areas clear. Make sure cords and hoses do not cross aisles or passageways where someone could trip over them.
- Stack and store materials and equipment where they do not create a hazard. Do not stack materials so high that they may fall, slip or collapse.

Use eye protection. Whenever there is a potential exposure to flying objects, eye protection must be worn. Framers should wear safety glasses, goggles or the equivalent when using pneumatic nail guns, staplers and other power tools. Train your workers to operate and use power tools properly and safely. Make sure that you have a program of regular inspection and maintenance of all equipment. Some important points to remember when using pneumatic nail guns and staplers include:

- Inspect tools before using and maintain them regularly.
- Make sure the muzzle or nose-guard safety spring is in place and operating properly.
- Never point it toward anyone; never assume the tool is empty.
- Make sure no other workers are in the line of fire before pressing the trigger.
- Make sure the operator and other workers exposed to nail-gun operations wear eye protection at all times.
- Do not carry the tool with your finger on the trigger, especially when walking or climbing a ladder. Do not carry the tool by the hose.

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Fall protection is often needed. As an employer, you are responsible for assessing fall hazards at your work site and including fall-protection measures in your project plans. When evaluating the job site, be aware of the following hazards:

Fall hazards less than 10 feet:

- Floor openings, holes (use guardrails or covers).
- Open-sided floors or surfaces four feet or more above adjacent surface (use guardrail system).
- Wall openings where a drop of at least four feet or more exists, such as open doorways, window openings, chutes, etc. (use guardrail system).
- Access points, such as ramps or walkways which are four feet or higher above the ground/floor (use guardrails); stairways with four risers or 30 inches high, whichever is less (use stair-rail system along unprotected sides and edges); ladders (tied off or secured at top and bottom, extended at least three feet beyond landing surface).

Fall hazards 10 feet and greater:

- You must develop and implement a written site-specific Fall Protection Work Plan for fall hazards 10 feet and greater. The plan must describe the hazards and the controls used to eliminate or reduce the hazards, include emergency-response plans and procedures, and be available on site.
- Tasks or conditions in which your employees may be exposed to fall hazards of 10 feet or more include: working near unprotected sides and edges; working from a scaffold or walkway over open space; raising walls; setting/rolling trusses; sheeting roofs; installing and removing fall-protection systems such as guardrails.

Whenever possible, try to eliminate the hazard or reduce exposure to the hazard.

Plan ahead and make sure you have good methods in place before starting a task. For example, when rolling trusses, install scaffold walkways along the interior of outside walls to avoid walking on the top plates of exterior walls. Your employees can also start sheeting the roof while working safely from the interior scaffold walkways. Sheet as much as possible to provide an area to work from once it is necessary to get onto the roof to finish the sheeting process. This way, your employees' exposures to fall hazards are greatly reduced.

When you need to use fall-protection systems, select the appropriate system that will protect your employees from the hazards. You must:

- Make sure the equipment is regularly inspected and maintained in good condition.
- Train your employees in the safe and proper use and care of personal fall-protection systems.

Be sure to always refer to manufacturers' instructions for installation and proper use.

Falls from ladders have resulted in injuries and deaths that could have been prevented. When using ladders, make sure that:

- Your employees are trained in the proper and safe use of ladders.
- Type I, IA or higher-rated ladders are used.
- Ladders are used only for the purpose for which they were designed (e.g., do not use a closed stepladder as a straight ladder).
- Ladders are set up properly and secured to prevent slipping or displacement.
- Workers have both hands free for climbing.
- Extension ladders extend at least three feet beyond the landing surface.

For more information about L&I's special focus on residential wood framing, call any of these numbers, then press "0" to speak to a customer-service specialist:

- Everett: 425-290-1300 • Seattle: 206-281-5400 • Spokane: 509-324-2600
- Tacoma: 253-596-3800 • Tumwater: 360-902-5799 • Yakima: 509-454-3700

You may also call any of L&I's 22 offices across the state or visit www.lni.wa.gov.

Published by the Department of Labor and Industries, Aug. 8, 2001. WAC 296-155 covers requirements regarding Accident Prevention Programs, first aid and personal protective equipment, as well as other safety topics relating to the construction industry. You can read this WAC and others at www.lni.wa.gov/wisha.